

Sports MONDAY

Santa Barbara Takes Two Out of Three vs. Sac State

As the saying goes, "Two out of three ain't bad."

For the second-straight weekend, the UCSB baseball team went on the road and came home with two more victories in the standings. This time, the Gauchos' victim was Big West rival Sacramento State. Yet the days of coasting through the



Chad Peshke

lower tier of the conference are over: It doesn't seem to matter whom Santa Barbara is playing, the games are all tough.

After having play postponed due to rain on Friday, the two teams played a doubleheader the following day, with UCSB (29-11; 4-2 in the Big West) winning game one 13-6, and dropping game two, 4-2. In the rubber game on Sunday, the Gauchos erased a 7-5 deficit to win 9-7 in

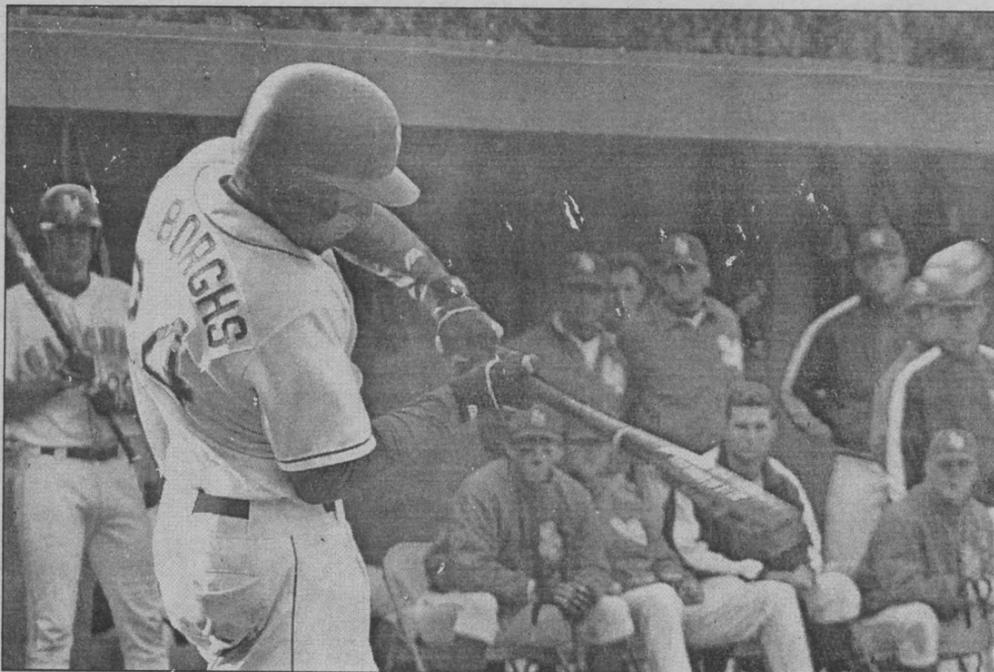
ten innings.

Santa Barbara jumped all over the Hornets on Saturday, posting three runs in the first inning. UCSB didn't let up in the second or third, scoring a combined six runs in the two innings to bolt to a 9-1 lead. The Gauchos would then add four more runs for the final tally.

Coming off his "Big West Pitcher of the Week" performance, junior starter James Garcia picked up the win for UCSB. The righty gave up only two earned runs in eight innings while striking out five. With the win, Garcia upped his win total to seven, good for second best on the squad behind senior pitcher Rylie Ogle.

The Gaucho bats went silent in the second game of the doubleheader, notching only two runs for the game. Although UCSB did pound out nine hits, it could not string together enough base knocks to make a difference. In fact, the Gauchos only RBI came in the fourth inning from junior designated hitter, Jed Stringham. Senior second baseman Chad Peshke and sophomore right fielder Ryan Spilborghs led the way for UCSB with two hits apiece.

Pitching in place of an injured



TRUC BUI / DAILY NEXUS FILE

Sophomore Ryan Spilborghs takes a cut at a pitch. The UCSB baseball team hit the road this weekend and came home the winners of two more games against Sacramento State. UCSB is now 4-2 in conference play.

Rylie Ogle, freshman Matt Vasquez was stuck with the loss after pitching 6.2 innings and giving up four runs, all of them earned.

Game three on Sunday turned into a see-saw affair, with the Gauchos ending up on top.

Sacramento State took the early lead, going up 4-2 after three innings. After the Hornets posted another run in the fourth, UCSB then put three runs on the board in the fifth to tie the game at 5-5. With the game tied at seven in the tenth, UCSB got

RBI singles Peshke and senior designated hitter Mike Koblach to go up 9-7. Senior reliever Jamie Gonzales closed out the Hornets in the tenth to give Santa Barbara the series victory.

—Matt Heitner

Gauchos' Hitting Disappears, Again

BY KEITH BUSAM
Staff Writer

The UCSB softball team was just starting to hit its stride.

The Gauchos had won four straight games, something they have done only one other time this season, and the team was beginning to figure out how to make crucial offensive plays needed to win games.

Unfortunately for the Gauchos, just as they were beginning to start to run instead of walk, they ran into a brick wall that goes by the name of Cal State Fullerton. #9 Cal State Fullerton, to be exact. After a long three-game series, Santa Barbara was only able to come away with some pride after three straight drubbings, 8-0, 6-0, and 8-0.

"I would say [before the series started that] we knew that we were going to play the #9 team in the nation," sophomore pitcher Sylvia Santos said. "We knew that

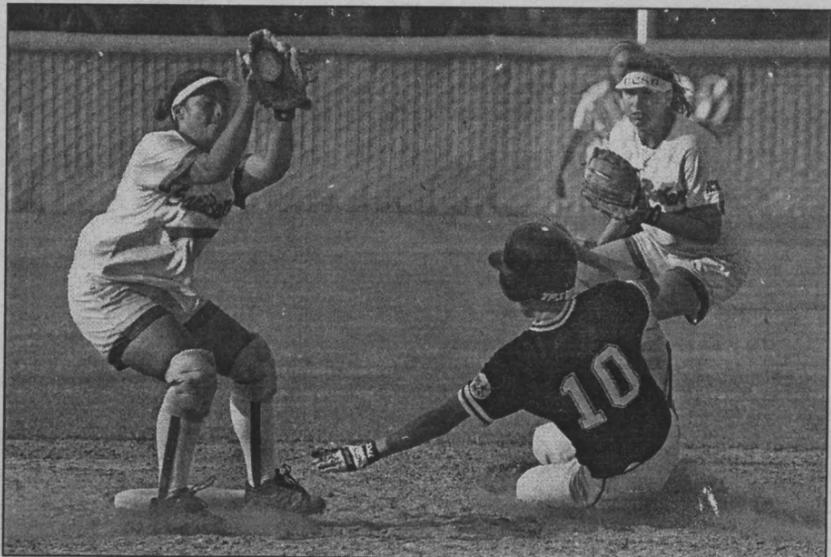
we were going to play a tough team and we tried to be at our best, but it wasn't good enough."

In Saturday's first game, Titan pitcher Jodie Cox tossed a three-hitter and struck out five batters en route to her 17th win of the year. Fullerton was hot swinging their bats as well. Jenny Topping and Yasmin Mossandehi both hit home runs for Fullerton, their 11th and 12th bombs of the season, respectively. The Gauchos could not even muster one extra base hit all game.

The nightcap wasn't much different for either team, but this time the Titans attacked UCSB with hurler Christy Robitaille, who threw a three-hitter and struck out six. Again it was Topping and Mossandehi smacking balls over the outfield fence for Fullerton, providing all the offense that they would need.

"Both [Cox and Robitaille] are great

See GAUCHOS, p.3A



JASON SCHOCK / DAILY NEXUS FILE

The UCSB softball team could not handle the heat of playing against the #9 Titans. Cal State Fullerton swept Santa Barbara in a convincing three-game series over the weekend.

The Future of Basketball Is in Good Hands

BY MATT HEITNER

With pundits from across the country — including the *Nexus* sports editor, Eliav Appelbaum — weighing in with their two cents about the National Basketball Association, I thought it only fair that I offer my own insight concerning the state of the NBA.

Many experts (and Mr. Appelbaum) would have you believe that the league is in trouble and in a dire need of a makeover. People bitch and moan about how boring the game is, how the players have no heart and, most of all, that the game lacks the star power it once had.

Well, I'm here to ask all you cynics: Which NBA are you watching?

Mine is an NBA with more intrigue and sub-plots than any daytime television show could come up with. Can Kobe and Shaq make up in time to lead the Lakers to a repeat? Will Chris Webber bring a title to Sacramento before he bolts for the bright lights of a bigger city (Chicago)? Can Stockton and Malone pick and roll their way to a title before osteoporosis sets in?

In the East, can the diminutive Allen Iverson carry the 76ers to the promised land? Will Alonzo Mourning's return lead to a championship for the Heat, or will Toronto's Vince Carter finally stake his claim as the next MJ?

For those of you who say that the NBA is lacking star power, just look at the names I've already mentioned — and I'm just getting started.

What about San Antonio's Tim Duncan, Minnesota's Kevin Garnett, Orlando's Tracy McGrady, and the Maverick's duo of Michael Finley and Dirk Nowitzki? All of them are just waiting to burst onto the national stage.

So far I've only listed the stars that are in the playoffs. On the outside looking in you have Steve Francis in

Houston, Antonio McDyess in Denver, and Gary Payton in Seattle. Practically the entire Clippers team shows flashes of brilliance. And don't forget about Paul Pierce up in Boston — the guy averaged 25.3 points a game this season, but does anybody get less respect?

All this talent adds up to never before seen parity in the NBA. All eight teams in the Western Conference have a chance to make it to the finals. This competitiveness only adds to the charm of the postseason.

So, with all the skill, and no clear-cut favorite, who will be the player to watch in the playoffs? Let me offer up two performers that promise to make a difference in the postseason: Tim Duncan and Allen Iverson.

We all know that the playoffs are when the stars step up, and that means that every other team in the West had better look out for Duncan. Every time his team needs a lift, or he goes up against a quality opponent like Garnett or Webber, Duncan goes off. Remember the way he carried the Spurs to the title a few years ago? Well, don't be surprised if he does it again this season.

If you're looking for the difference-maker in the East, look no further than Allen Iverson. Iverson may be controversial off the court, but on it the man is almost unstoppable. He races around the court with blinding speed, a cocky smile and a desire to win; if you saw the fourth quarter of the NBA All-Star game, you know what I'm talking about. He has carried Philly all year long, so don't expect him to stop now that the pressure is on.

So, while skeptics may say that the players in the NBA today are bringing the league down, I say just give today's players a chance. They may not be exactly what you're hoping for, but it's time for a new breed of ballers to take over the NBA.

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- *Provide additional job opportunities for students.
- *To enhance the overall quality of life by providing opportunities for healthy lifestyles.



Student Athletic Fee Initiative

- *Renovate and improve facilities at Storke and Robertson Fields, Harder Stadium, Pauley Track, Baseball/ Softball Fields, and Rob Gym.
- *Build new Aquatics and Tennis Complex
- *Facilities will benefit students, the SB community and Intercollegiate athletics

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- *Provide facilities such as meeting rooms, lounges, and a computer lab for all students.



GAUCHOS

Continued from p.1A

pitchers," freshman pitcher Katie Junge said after the games. "We have pitchers that throw those pitches and we have seen pitches like that in games before, but it just seemed like we had a really tough time hitting them."



JASON SCHOCK / DAILY NEXUS FILE

The Gaucho bats went cold this weekend while Fullerton's arms heated up. UCSB collected only one extra base hit against the Titans.

With Saturday's doubleheader disappointment behind them, the Gauchos looked to get back on track with a win on Sunday. However, the Gauchos couldn't make contact at the plate; a hot day in the valley was made even more unbearable when the Titans turned up a heat of their own, sending UCSB packing with their third-straight shutout.

Fullerton dominated Santa Barbara all weekend in two aspects of softball that are very important: pitching and hitting. The Titans surrendered only nine hits all weekend long, and only one Gaucho hit-

We knew that we were going to play the #9 team in the nation. ... We tried to be at our best, but it wasn't good enough.

**- Sylvia Santos
sophomore starting pitcher**

ter got an extra base hit all series. But it was clearly Fullerton's offensive firepower that stole the show. Fullerton hit five home runs in three games, many

of which were tape measure material. Mossandehi hit a home run that one fan speculated, had it not hit the top of a light post, would have traveled about 400 feet.

Although this weekend's road trip did not have the favorable outcome that the Gauchos had hoped for, this upcoming weekend's trip

to Utah could help boost UCSB's confidence. Santa Barbara will square off for a three-game series against Utah State, a team the Gauchos dominated back on March 3 as they rode away with a 3-1 win.

"We have beaten them before and so I think we will have an advantage," Junge said of their coming match-up with Utah State. "We will be more motivated. We have young players and are starting to come together. We are definitely going to get a lot better."

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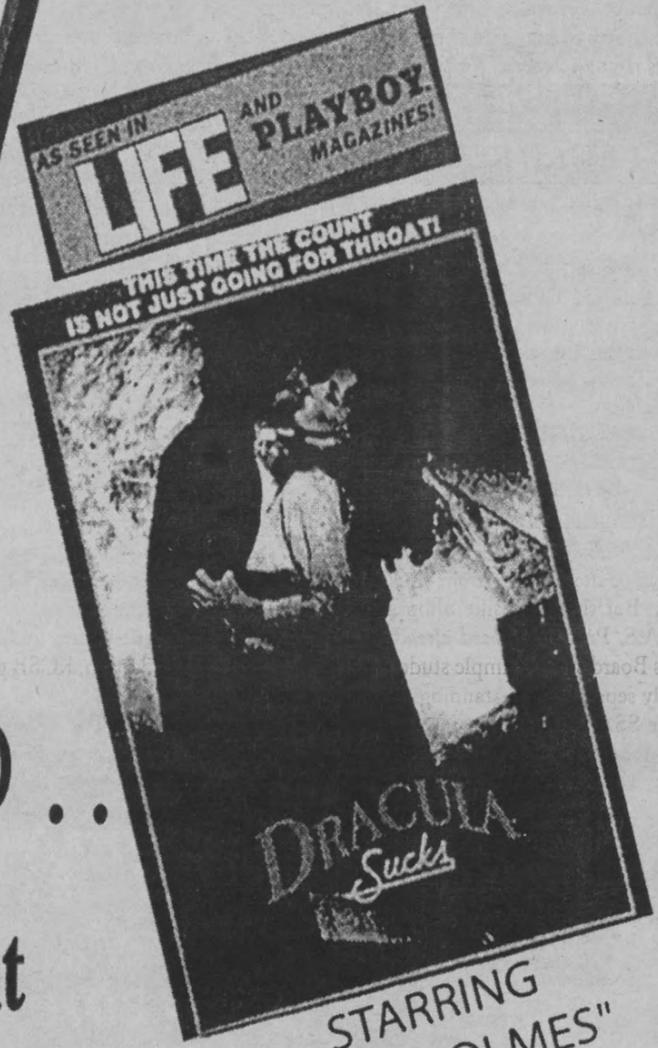
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